

The History of Transformation of Russian State System in Turkestan Exemplified by the Activities of the General-Governor's Office

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Abstract: The second half of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century are largely characterized by radical changes in political and social-economical situation in Turkestan. The historical analysis of the above mentioned period requires multiple approaches while doing research into characteristics of that time. The main cause at the time was the Russian conquest and establishment of laws of the Russian Empire in the territories settled by numerous nationalities with their already formed life styles and economies.

Keywords: Russian, Turkestan, History.

Under the new governing conditions, the peoples of Central Asia faced a rather hard task coping with forcibly introduced state regulations in exchange of those established in 16th and 17th centuries, which were hardly ever altered since they well suited the interests of feudal top class in so-called living formations as khanates.

The history of colonization is generally viewed rather ambiguously. The historians of the Center of the Empire justify the conquest of alien territories explaining that the mission from the Center was that of civilization, whereas the representatives of conquered colonies put forward arguments of economical aftermaths after conquest and claim that the conquerors retarded social and economical progress for quite a while.

Scientific evaluation criteria for historical epochs are generally transformed with the time passing. In connection with that the Office records of General-Governor of Turkestan, who was an executive body at that time, are of special interest since they contain important information on functions and methods of work which were applied at the initial stages of Soviet State System in Turkestan. The evaluation of activities in the General-Governor's office is based on the records of historiography including the School of Annals, the general line of which is "The Total History". Under this principle the perception and studying the past is viewed through taking into consideration various factors of life in a certain society.

This article is about historical retrospective on establishment of record management activities in the Turkestan General-Governors' Offices and is based on the records of the Offices which in turn were the State Governing Bodies in the Russian Empire.

Studying the History of Turkestan of the second half and the beginning of the 20th century can mainly be based on Historical Systematical Approach widely applied in many countries.

The suggested topic for studies requires the detailed application of logical and historical methods to identify interrelated forms of records management as well as the Office itself in retrospective. It also requires comparative methods in order to collate the influence of political situation on formation of new methods for record management at various levels of administration, which were going through various transformations under the conditions of colonial dictatorship in Turkestan. The roles of main narrators will be presented by the documents revealing the History

of Lawmaking in Russian Empire as well as by the materials of record management from the Office of Turkestan General-Governors. As a working model, there is going to be used the method of structuralism which involves gathering facts and identifying relations among them leading to the up- building of the whole permanent object – The Office of Turkestan General-Governors. The most common methods, which here are used, are those of induction and deduction which help to constructively get an idea about the character of adopted styles of record management and identify the dates of establishment for records management in the Office of Turkestan General Governors.

The starting point for studying the topic could serve the Order of the Russian Emperor #44844 as of July 15th 1867 concerning “The Establishment of Turkestan Military Quarters “and stating that the civil administration on the part of the military troops should be carried out in the military manner under the General-Governor’s Office.(1) For the peoples of Turkestan the idea of an Office was not a new one since such institutions had already functioned before. For instance, M.M. Isakov Uzbek orientalist, who studied the history of written artifacts, claimed that at the time of the Assyrian Kingdom, in line with cuneiform, there had already operated Aramean Office.(2) Developing his idea about ancient offices, he writes that they had already existed “under Akhemenids, when Aramean Office operated from Egypt to Northwestern India and Central Asia as well as Mesopotamia and Caucasus”.(3)

Here is an idea of ancient “office” described by I. M. Dyakonov the famous Russian scientist. In the middle of the 2nd century B.C. Parthinian Tsars conquered Babylonia and the scribes of Babylonian offices came into business contact with Babylonian scribes.(4)

N.A. Abdurakhimova, a famous Uzbek scientist, mentions the name of an “office” as “mahkama” though in some sources it is mentioned as “devonkhona”. From our point of view, the definition “mahkama” suits properly the description of activities carried out by the Office of Turkestan General- Governors.

In order to more accurately get the idea of an “office”, it is necessary to refer to the History of the Russian State System. In the History of Russia offices had already operated before the rule of Peter 1 under various names such as palatials, “tiuns”, orders etc. At the time of Peter’s rule, his own office was known as “The Cabinet of His Imperial Majesty” which functioned until 1917 though there has not been found anything about the date of its establishment. (6)

The historical literature available, as a source, makes it possible to assume that the Emperor’s Cabinet started to function from 1704. For Example, the Order as of August 12th 1724 says about the Cabinet’s sphere of activities as well as administration over collection of fees paid by salt in order to keep and maintain the Office. However, after the death of Peter I there was issued the order as of September 7th 1704 according to which Governors, as well as top military commanders, were to report on new and important matters to the Emperor’s Cabinet. Special messengers sent with reports to Supreme Council or the Senate, were in the first place to make their appearance in the Cabinet.(7) This Institution of Russian Autocracy was known under this name until 1812, following that it was renamed and started to be known as Emperor’s Office, which was not a state institution as such. However, since it operated at the Emperor’s Court it influenced significantly the activities of other state institutions.

Initially, from late 18th century the name of Emperor’s Cabinet still covered the structural part of Emperor’s Office which administered Emperor’s own treasury, legal estate, industrial sites and other assets that belonged to the Emperor’s family.

In 1812 The Cabinet of His Emperor’s Majesty got a new name of His Own Emperor Majesty’s Office. It was established due to circumstances of utter emergency under the direction of A. Arakchiev, the state officer. According to certain sources the Office was located in his own house.(8) The Office dealt with matters of highest consideration, in other words the matters were to be considered by the Emperor himself. The best times for the Office came during Nikolay’s rule since the Office only reported to him and acted on behalf of his name. At that time there

were set up six of its branches. At the end of January 1826 the Office was reorganized and divided into two departments the First and the Second. The First Department carried out general control over the services of civil officers, making assignments for top officers and working out regulations for their service. The Second Department dealt with legislation acts of the Empire.

The New Emperor started his rule with suppressing the revolt on the Senate Square on December 14th 1825. In order to prevent undesirable events the Emperor needed a new structure. Soon after, on the 3rd of July 1826 there was established the Third Department which was involved in administrative supervision and political issues. All the executives had the title of Adjutant – General and the executives in the branches the executives had the titles of Quarter – Officers. This department was called as chivalrous. Due to the color of uniforms and ability to keep secrets it was also called as “Light Blue Agency”. For nearly 40 years the Office operated under cover and only the report on their 50 year activities drawn up in 1876 reveals the activities of the Agency. The Managers of the Third Department were Earl A.K.Benkendorff, Earl P.A. Shuvalov, N.V. Mezentssev and M.T. Loris-Melikov. In 1880 this Department was shut down. (9)

In 1828 there was organized the Forth Department “*Mariyinskoe Vedomstvo*” to direct charity institutions under auspices of the Empires Marya Fyodorovna. There were also temporarily organized the 5th (1836-1866) and the 6th (1842-1845) Departments to prepare new state regulations on peasants and reforms for administrative system in Northern Caucasus. In 1882 after reorganizations in Emperor’s Office all the Departments came to a shut down, except for the First Department which became authorized.

At the initial stage His Own Emperor Majesty’s Office dealt only with personal matters and documents of the Emperor, however, later role of the Office gets stronger and it starts to direct Civil Services dealing with such issues as:

1. separation from the service those officers who did not have any right to do state service or did not have the right to have the titles appropriate for the position
2. preparation of the regulations for hiring procedures for civil services and doing the civil services
3. designing a unified uniform for civil officers

The Emperor highly appreciated records management in the Department number one(10). From 1836 this Department was entitled to supervise services of all the civil officers. With this purpose within the institution there was organized the Inspection Department at the Civil Office. In this Department, there were collected all the records related to assignments for positions and conferring titles. In 1858 this Department was annulated and its responsibilities were laid on the Heraldry Department of the Senate.

After annulations of other Departments in 1882, Department One once again was given a name of His Own Office and it started to deal mostly with the issues related to the service of top civilian officers. In order to direct civil services at the Office, there functioned Inspection Department (1894-1917).

From 1882 the Emperor’s Office handled many matters such as execution of Emperor’s orders, drawing up important decrees, rescripts and other documents coming to the Office of the Emperor. The Documents coming from province authorities were given consideration and resolutions on them were made. The functions of the Office also involved submitting to the Emperor applications from charity organizations, which were not under any Ministries, for the Emperor’s consideration. Also the Office dealt with issues concerning conditions for civil service as well as granting awards.

The main task of Department two was arranging laws of Russian Empire into a code. Apart from that the Department censored law literature published by private individuals, prepared conclusive statements related to juridical issues for top state institutions and actively participated in legislation sphere. The Russian Emperor Nikolai I believed that availability of codes of laws for

general usage granted law order in the country. That is why he gave an order to provide authority institutions with the codes at the expense of the state so that the printed laws “were kept in proper places and were abided”. (11)

Department two prepared The Full Collection of the Empire Laws under chronological order including all of them, even those passed in 1649 that had already dropped out of use. In this way there was completed the publication of forty five volumes. With this purpose there was established the printing house which later printed the collection, (1825-1881) so called Second Collection, issued volume by volume annually. The whole Collection consisted of 233 volumes. For practical usage for state and other institutions there was published another friendly to use Code of Laws which contained only legislation acts divided and printed in separate volumes thematically. For example, volume three, printed in 1833, contained the Code of Regulations for civil services. From time to time the codes were reprinted excluding the laws dropped out of use.

We have selected some of such regulations.(12) These publications are kept in the Library of Central Archive of the Republic of Uzbekistan. Some of them were published unofficially since the Codes and Regulations were being used constantly in the process of records management.

When in 1882 Department two was annulated the right to publish orders was laid on The State Council. With this purpose there was organized Codification Department also annulated in 1894, later the matters were passed on to The State Office. The system of records management activities in the Office of Turkestan General Governor was taken after the similar systems of Emperor's Office, Gerald Department etc. Probably on the basis of Ruling Senate represented by nine senators and ober-secretary and authorized by Peter I on 22nd February 1711 there was established the Senate Office as it was mentioned in the Senate Order as of 27th February 1711.

Under the order of the ruling Senate as of March 27th 1711 there was established the structure of the Senate office, and records management was divided and laid on various desks. The First Desk, so called Secret Desk, under the direction of two executives, was to copy and keep all the Tsar's orders and letters, which were sent to the Senate under those orders. Also, it was to collect and keep letters received from governors and handle the correspondence coming from the Senate to the Tsar and other representatives of authorities concerning important matters. Moreover it collected invoices and payment papers, land documents, sentences and Senate orders. The Desk was authorized to make copies of the documents for submission in other countries. All the documents that were collected were registered in chronological order and bound in books.(13)

The Second Desk, so called Order Desk, was to check execution of orders and sentences of the Senate, it was also to observe the execution of military orders as well as *monasterial*, local, Siberian and financial ones. The Desk was to learn everything about Moscow province and Moscow garrison and relations with other provinces. There were supposed to be about two thousand clerks there and everyone was dealing with certain, specifically assigned operations. All the cases and statements were registered and bound in books.

The Third Desk, so called, Province Desk directed provinces. Every officer had certain provinces to cover. For example, one of them was covering Kievskaya, Azovskaya, voronezhskaya and Kazanskaya provinces, The second ran matters of Peterburgskaya, Arkhangelskaya provinces and the third those of Smolenskaya and Sibirskaya provinces . One person dealt with matters such as incomes, expenditures and other financial matters.

The Forth desk, called Classifying one, remained to operate as it had done before.(14)

In December 1718 there was introduced the Order “On Position of the Senate” according to which the Senate was to be formed from the Board Presidents. All the Governors and Heads of smaller divisions were to submit statements, which could not be considered by the Board, to the Senate Office.(15)

Under the Order of the Senate as of February 19, 1719 on formation of the Senate Office, as it was exemplified by Boards, senior officers started to be called secretaries, those under them just

officers and accordingly the Staff List was drawn up. There were supposed to be two secretaries to handle matters and direct the Board, the third secretary was to deal with foreign affairs and give orders. The Senate Order dated 30th of January 1720 gave description for the responsibilities of loggers, “aktuarius”, officers and archivists in the Senate.

Under the Order of Senate as of 5th of July 1721 all Tsar’s orders sent to board and offices were to be submitted in the Senate for approbation, after authorization they were to be registered “authentically” in a book. Following this, the orders could be published and duly executed.(17)

On the 5th of February 1722, there were authorized position instructions for Geroldmeister. From that time the Geroldmeister’s Office started to function.

The Turkestan Office of General Governor, while doing activities, constantly referred to decisions of the State Council and its Office. The State Office of Russian Empire Council (1810-1917) was established as a structural subdivision of the State Council on the basis of the manifest on “establishing State Council” issued on the 1st January 1810 by Alexander I. It was organized under the Plan for State Developments, which was drawn up by M.M. Speransky. That was also Speransky who became its first leader(18). According to the Manifest, the State Office was headed by Secretary and his Deputy (at that time they were called comrades). The Office was divided into subdivisions at the Head of which was appointed ‘stats’ secretary. At the start, the State Office consisted of the divisions which were involved in the matters of law, martial law, civil matters, state economy and code of laws. There were also divisions which dealt with the matters of State Secretary and archive. Later the number of divisions changed due to changes in the structure of the State Council. For example, after the transition in 1906, there were additionally established the divisions of Persona Files and Miscellaneous Matters.

Through the State Office there were put all the matters which required consideration at the State Council. They were sent on the name of State Secretary for consideration, if the matters were appropriate they were further sent to appropriate Division in order to later consider them in the Departments of State Council. The states of the matters were reported at the department meetings by “stats” secretaries or their assistants. At the Board meetings the reports were made by state Secretary and Members of the Board. Apart from preparing matters for hearing, the State Office also documented materials in the forms of journals on Department Meetings and Board Meetings. Also there were prepared excerpts from Meetings for the Emperor.(19)

The State Office played one of the key roles in Administrative Machine in the Russian Empire. At the times of establishment and functioning the Office Of Turkestan General-Governor was in close contact with State Secretaries such as Sergey Nicolaevitch Urusov(1878-1883), Alaxander Martinovich Solsky(1867-1878), Nikolay Valeryevich Muravyev (1894-1897), Vyacheslav Konstantinovich Pleve (1894-1902) Vladimir Nikolayevich Kokovtsev (1904-1909), baron Uriy Alexandrovich Iksui l von Gildenbandt (1904-1911), Alexender Alexandrovich Makarov (1909-1911), Sergey Efimovich Krizhanovsky (1911-1917). (20)

Administratively Turkestan Governed Territory consisted of provinces, districts, *volosts* and smaller districts. *Volost* Governing Bodies were introduced on the 7th of August 1797 on the basis of the document “On Division State Settlements and Order of Interior Administration”. The population of one *volost* was not to exceed three thousand registered people (21). In order to administrate the *volosts* there was set up the *Volost* Board supervised by the *Volost* Head, the senior man elected by the population of the *volost* and yeoman (*volost* clerk position). *Volost* Head and Yeoman were elected annually by the population of the villages and *kishlaks* or *auls* (small settlements of nomadic time). In every village or *kishlak* there had to be an elected person (senior man) and every ten houses were observed by “*desyatsky*”. Village senior men were elected once a year.” *Desyatskys*” were replaced monthly in succession.

The Turkestan Office of General –Governor often sent reports on its activities to the Geroldy Senate Department. The notions of Geroldmeister Office were first mentioned in the Table on Ranks which was authorized on 23d of January 1722. Goldmeister was to run matters concerning

nobility assets. On the 5th of February Geroldmeister was authorized to run matters of nobility and draw up three types of lists of all their members. He was authorized to observe so that the nobles did not avoid doing military service, also, on the request of the Senate, he had to present candidates for opened vacancies, and to run lists of *ober*-officers who were not of Noble background. With the time passing the Geroldmeister Office extended the field of its activities. For instance, according to the Senate Order as of 1st of April 1755, all local establishments were to submit information on hired and dismissed offices from nobility. Later this regulation became the basis for Annual Address Calendars, which had to be submitted to the Goldmeister's by the offices.(22)

According to the Senate Order as of 16th October 1761, Goldmeister Office was laid upon the task to draw up Nobility Descent Books as well as issuing passports and certificates confirming Noble descent. On the 18th of January 1762 there was issued the Senate Order on preparation and execution of matters concerning granting various titles.

Changes and amendments concerning responsibilities of Geroldy outlined the main sphere of the activities in this establishment, exactly: 1) printing charters and diplomas under various names and values, as well as creating coats of arms; 2) granting titles for years of service for all ranks in the State Administration, issuing patents for titles and keeping blank forms; 3) assignments, relocations and dismissals of the officers. The most suitable of the activities in the Turkestan Office of General-Governor was the second position. The third position was under direct control of the Turkestan Office however, the documents were prepared in the Main Office. As for the activities in the first position, part of them were carried out in Turkestan, for example, issuing certificates and granting titles.

In 1868 the Geroldy were turned into Senate Department and all the activities in it were carried out under the same regulations as those which were established for the activities in the Senate.(23)

The second regulation on "Office Order" requires special attention. The committee for drawing up the regulation was authorised by the Order as of 14th November 1784. That committee was to complete the regulation concerning the order of office procedures, taking into consideration inquiries received from General Governors. The Senate Order as of 12th February 1786 required, before the full office blank forms were published, accepting documents in the form of complaints on the part of wronged people. Instead of writing "Your slave subject", it was suggested to write it as "Your truthful subject".(24) The same regulations were applied in the Turkestan Office for records management.

The continuation of the above order was the order of March 15th 1798 "on Establishment of Office for Petersburg Governor" with the staff of six offices and with allocation of finance to keep the Office.(25) Under the Order of June 25th 1798 there were authorized lists of Staff for the Offices Of Kiev and Malorossian Governors(26)

The above law documents started to serve as the basis for the activities in the Offices of Governors and were used as reliable information for studying records management activities in the Turkestan Office. The analysis of the Office documents reveals the facts that the Turkestan Office combined among other activities 1) subdivision taken as a model from the Office of His Own Imperial Majesty 2) subdivision of divisions into the desks, borrowed as a pattern from Senate Administrative Office 3) work methods for preparation of Office materials going from desks to divisions, follow up hearings of special Office reports, which was adopted according to the style applied in State Office and State Council. Taking into consideration the importance of the above mentioned historical sources in the forms of various Senate Orders and other material concerning their activities; it is possible to state that they became the basis for activities in the Turkestan Office of General Governor.

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